

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-13 are pending in the present application.

Specification

The Examiner provides suggested guidelines, including section headings, for a preferred layout of the specification. Applicants point out that amendments to the specification, including section headings, were made in the Preliminary Amendment filed September 5, 2006.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(e) as anticipated by Kakuta et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,969,988, hereinafter "Kakuta").

Filed concurrently herewith to perfect the claim for priority in the present application is a verified English translation of the priority document, i.e., German Patent Application No. 102004010613.4. Kakuta has an effective U.S. filing date of June 16, 2005 that is not earlier than the earliest priority date of the present application, i.e., March 2, 2004. Accordingly, Kakuta is disqualified as prior art for the present application.

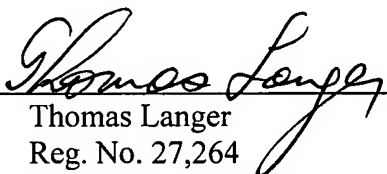
In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests the rejections under 35 USC § 102(e) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

This application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance, and early notice to that effect is solicited.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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